

ADDRESS BY COMMISSIONER PAUL A. WALKER  
VICE CHAIRMAN, FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
FOURTH ANNUAL INSTITUTE ON RADIO-AUDIO-VISUAL EDUCATION  
MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL OF ART, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS  
9:45 A.M., THURSDAY, JULY 6, 1950

NEW GOALS IN EDUCATIONAL RADIO AND TELEVISION

My pleasure in participating in this Institute today is augmented by the fact that I am here not only as a member of the Federal Communications Commission and as an enthusiastic proponent of educational radio but also as a defender of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In preparation for my coming here to speak, I swore, as did other speakers on this program, faithfully to discharge my duties as "program participant," and to support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Thus, I find myself in the unique position of having heretofore sworn allegiance to the United States, when I became an officer in the Oklahoma National Guard; to the State of Oklahoma, when I assumed office as State Corporation Commissioner; and again three times to the United States upon my appointment by the President and confirmation by the Senate as Federal Communications Commissioner. Moreover, by virtue of a commission from Governor McMath I am also an Arkansas Traveler.

I hasten to add — since I am a federal official — that I love all the 48 states of America and, if through the years to come occasion should arise for me to take an oath of allegiance to all the rest of them, including, perhaps, even Alaska and Hawaii, I do not want you good people here to feel that such oaths will in any way diminish my loyalty to the Old Bay State.

When Emerson said that the shot fired by the embattled farmers at Concord was "heard round the world" he was exercising poetic license. But you embattled educators gathered at this Institute here realize more fully than anyone else that the battle of ideas today is, by means of radio, literally heard round the world and is being waged round the world.

This struggle to reach men's minds via radio is daily increasing in momentum and intensity and the sound and fury of it are heard in the most distant reaches of the globe.

Every nation that can get the necessary equipment is now utilizing this modern instrument of international broadcasting to transmit its ideas to the peoples of other nations. In fact the International Telecommunications Union has received requests for 250 per cent more frequencies than it has available.

The Voice of America is beamed round the world from 36 short wave stations with 28 hours of programs every 24-hour day in 24 languages to tell the story of American democracy.



Now a group of Senators has proposed a vast expansion of this international broadcasting program envisioning a "Marshall Plan of Ideas" with a worldwide network to carry our message into "every radio receiver in the world." And another proposal before the Senate would supplement the "Voice of America" with the "Vision of America" — a system of worldwide television networks.

In these crucial days since President Truman ordered our forces into Korea, this whole matter of peoples understanding peoples is brought more sharply into focus. We are made to feel more strongly than ever that if people everywhere could know and understand the story of American democracy and of the sincerity of our intentions, we would make long strides toward improving the chances for an orderly world.

In crises like the present one, we realize more keenly than ever the need to refute misleading propaganda with the real facts about the American way of life and the history of our dealings with other nations.

In the last war we developed radio broadcasting as a mighty weapon of war. Since then we have made considerable progress in developing it as a weapon of peace. The fighting in Korea reminds us that we need to accelerate that progress as much as possible in the days to come.

In addition to broadcasting to their neighbors, most of the nations of the world are building up their domestic broadcasting facilities. This is being actively promoted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. It is interesting to note that the Subcommission on Radio has recommended that UNESCO "request the governments of member states to ensure that broadcasting organizations devote a specified portion of their usual broadcasting time to school broadcasts and more generally to mass education broadcasts." A survey made by UNESCO reveals that most nations canvassed are keenly aware of the importance of educational broadcasting.

In Germany where the Voice of radio was for so long merely the Voice of Hitler, the stations are now functioning as instruments of democracy under local control. Forum discussions of controversial issues have become popular. American specialists are being sent over by the State Department this summer to assist and advise and German broadcasters are also brought to the United States to study the functioning of radio in a democracy.

Here in the United States where we already have far-flung AM and FM systems and a hundred television stations, we are now considering the feasibility of color television and we are also proposing to open a vast new territory in the public domain of the radio spectrum — the Ultra High Frequency band — for many additional television channels.

In every part of the globe and on every front broadcasting is pushing on to new goals to meet the new challenges of this fast-moving, dynamic era.

You who come to these annual Institutes are equipping yourselves to play an increasingly effective role in this exciting development of broadcasting. You appreciate the potentialities of this development for good or evil for your communities, for your nation and for the world. Your attendance here



shows you are aware of your responsibilities for leadership in the struggle to promote broadcasting in the public interest.

The educator seeking to employ this modern technological teaching aid of broadcasting has two approaches open to him. He can work out cooperative arrangements with the commercial broadcasters of his community and he can also construct and operate his own stations.

The history of educational radio is studded with conspicuous success stories in both fields.

In this connection it is well to bear in mind that this nation now has 2800 commercial AM and FM stations and 100 commercial TV stations in operation and all of them are obligated under the terms by which they obtain their license to give a reasonable amount of time to education. This is truly a mighty instrumentality which the educator should employ to the utmost.

A distinguished example of effective use of commercial stations that comes readily to mind is the Lowell Institute Cooperative Broadcasting Council of this city.

Back in 1639 John Lowell endowed the Lowell Institute to provide free public lectures. In 1947, the Institute expanded this service by taking to the air. Six New England colleges and Universities now broadcast regularly over six commercial stations. Both the schools and the stations are to be highly commended for this arrangement.

In this area of cooperative arrangements with commercial stations as in other areas of radio, the more the educator improves his knowledge of the medium and his skill in its utilization — the more he can adapt his program to the demands of broadcasting — the more rewarding will be his efforts.

Now let me turn to the field in which the educator is the master of his own house — his own educational station. There are now some 35 of these stations in AM broadcasting AM offers only limited hopes for the educator.

But in the new and improved system of aural broadcasting — FM — it is a case of horizons unlimited for the educational broadcaster. Today there are 38 high power and medium power non-commercial educational FM stations on the air and nine more under construction. As a further aid to the educator, the Commission some time ago established a new class of FM station — 10-watt stations which cover a radius of from two to five miles and which can be built for \$2000 to \$3000. These can later be built into high power stations.

There are now 21 of these low power stations in operation and 14 more are under construction.

To facilitate the operation of these stations, the Commission has just created a third-class radiotelephone operator's license. This will make it possible for students or other non-technical persons to operate these 10-watt stations with only a minimum knowledge of basic practice and basic law concerning transmitter operation.



In Boston, as you know, the Boston University station WBUR is in the medium power class, while WERA of Emerson College is in the low power class. Both types of stations can do a splendid job for the educator.

One of these FM stations is operated by a grade school, the P. G. Beauregard School of New Orleans. Several high schools have their own FM station. And one station is operated by the Louisville Public Library. At the request of the State Department, the FCC has proposed to set aside a non-commercial educational FM channel for the United Nations headquarters in New York City.

Some of the nation's foremost universities have expanded their campus by 50 to 60 miles through the use of a high power FM station.

In Wisconsin, a state-wide network of these non-commercial educational FM stations has been built up. Five stations are already in operation, another is under construction and two more are planned. The State of Wisconsin is truly moving its educational resources to the people. The poorest citizen shares these opportunities with the richest. In a recent report, the director of this network described the benefits as follows:

"What does this mean to the people of central and north-central Wisconsin?

"It means that, with an FM radio receiver, they can hear static-free educational, public service broadcasts day and night the year round. They can get the very latest information and counsel on farming and home-making. They can 'go to college at home by radio.' They can take a regular university course in psychology, literature, history, or American government and politics. They can enjoy the School of the Air broadcasts planned for boys and girls in the elementary school classrooms.

"They can hear at least three daily programs of the world's finest symphonic and concert music. They can hear their legislative representatives on a daily broadcast while the legislature is in session. They can hear programs planned for children as young as 3 or 4 years and programs designed to challenge the most adult mind.

"Educators and public officials realize that the educational job to be done by radio is so big that it requires full access to radio facilities at all times. Commercial stations are, of course, contributing much to public knowledge and enlightenment, but no matter how generous and public-spirited their owners and managers are, they should not be expected to reserve the large amounts of time needed to do the whole job. Because of the nature of their business, they must measure programs in terms of popularity and mass appeal. They provide what most people want to hear. Yet people have needs which are not served by mass-audience programs. These needs dictate the nature of the state broadcasting service which then supplements the extensive service of commercial stations.



"But what of the cost of these new stations? The taxpayer has a right to know what he must pay for the service he gets. \*\*\* The entire network of FM stations needed to cover the state should cost no more than 6 or 8 miles of pavement. Or no more than a new school building in a single community. Yet the network will provide the means of serving the whole state, all people of all ages, fourteen to sixteen hours a day every day in the year."

It was this network that broadcast the now-famous lecture by Dr. John A. Schindler of the Monroe Clinic, Monroe, Wisconsin in February of last year. I am sure you have heard of it. It was entitled "How to Live One Hundred Years — Happily." Since then the talk has been broadcast by scores of stations in the United States and Canada. Millions heard the doctor on the University of Chicago Roundtable. The Reader's Digest and other magazines printed the talk. One newspaper called it "The Speech of the Year." The New York Times referred to the incident as "overnight fame from one radio appearance." Now the doctor is expanding his ideas into a book.

The University of Michigan FM station has been bringing history to life in thrilling fashion in a series of broadcasts based on the historical documents in the university's William L. Clements library. A Columbus Day program in this series centered on a report written by Christopher Columbus to Ferdinand and Isabella while he was sailing home from his first voyage to the New World. More than 30 other Michigan stations carried this series.

The record of educational radio is replete with outstanding instances of fresh and original contributions to our knowledge and culture.

I appeal to the educational institutions of America — the universities the colleges, and the public school systems — to depart from their old ways of thinking, to envision the potentialities of this technological teaching aid and to participate now — without further delay — in the launching of a dramatic new and expanded phase of usefulness to both the children and the adults of this nation.

These FM channels are yours. At a time when spectrum space is bitterly fought over, the educational band is kept roped off. But I must warn you that spectrum space is too valuable to permit any sizeable segment of it to lie idle forever.

I call your attention to a pamphlet to be issued free of charge this fall by the United States Office of Education and the Radio Manufacturers Association, to be entitled "Put Your School on the Air." You will find in it practical guidance on the construction and operation of an FM educational station.

The educators of America, if they wish to meet the challenge of modern living and if they wish to avail themselves of the modern tools of science, should plan to operate their own stations, should plan state and regional networks. And they should envision nationwide networks — networks devoted solely to classroom and adult education — networks that will pool the finest educational resources of our time for the benefit of all the nation. Such networks



could carry into every schoolroom not only our Eisenhowers, our Conants, and our Hutchinses but they would serve as a vast and exciting meeting place for the children of all sections of our nation.

The static-free, fade-free character of FM which makes the medium so suitable for re-broadcasting from one station to another would go far to making such networking operations technically and financially feasible. This type of networking eliminates the usual networking costs of telephone lines and radio relay circuits. Also, it transmits programs in the full 15,000 cycle range of FM fidelity.

Besides the Wisconsin network I have mentioned, the feasibility of FM rebroadcasting is being demonstrated by the Continental Network of commercial stations, and by the Rural Radio Network of New York State of 11 stations. The programs of WQXR-FM, of the New York Times, consisting predominately of classical music and hourly news bulletins, have just been made available to the stations in this network. It extends for 550 miles and covers 42 upstate counties.

Many educators tell us that they are waiting for further commercial FM development and the availability of more sets before they build their own stations. I don't think they ought to wait. I think they should do their part to put programs on the air and give people an incentive to purchase FM sets. However, there is no question that an acceleration of commercial FM would help the educational stations.

First, let me point out that 700 commercial stations are on the air, and there are 5,500,000 FM sets in the hands of the public. Better and cheaper FM sets are being put on the market. Moreover, FM can be built into television sets by the manufacturer at a comparatively low cost — which cannot be done with AM.

If the earlier hopes of FM enthusiasts had been realized FM would today be the dominant medium of aural broadcasting. And it would be an aural system noted for high-power, high-fidelity and freedom from interference. It would be the kind of an aural system that could grow side by side with television. It would be infinitely superior to AM which is being steadily degraded by the addition of new stations which can only be put on the air at the expense of the existing stations.

As far back as 1940, the Commission had this to say of FM:

".....Amplitude modulation stations in the standard broadcast band may be required indefinitely for the purpose of giving widespread rural coverage. For coverage of centers of population and trade areas, the new class of station offers a distinct improvement."

And in 1945 in establishing the new FM band, the Commission said:

"In making an allocation for FM, it is the Commission's purpose to make provision for a service which will not be simply a new and improved broadcast service but which will be the finest aural broadcast service which is attainable under the present state of the radio art."



I am persuaded that time is working on behalf of FM and that it will continue to move ahead. I applaud the statement made by Michael R. Hanna, manager of WHCU of Cornell University, Ithaca, and manager of the FM Rural Radio Network in announcing his decision to carry the New York Times programs: that the move will be backed by "one of the most intense promotion campaigns FM has ever enjoyed." He added:

"It is ridiculous to assume that the closing of a relative handful of FM stations across the country symbolized the failure of FM. FM has not failed. Some broadcasters have failed to realize its possibilities."

What of education's stake in television?

The Federal Communications Commission feels that as soon as the freeze on construction is lifted, television will move forward rapidly to a position as the dominant broadcasting medium. Already, with television only on the threshold of its development, there are nearly seven million receiving sets in the hands of the public. It is expected that in three years there will be around 25 million sets in the hands of the public. The hundred — 105 to be exact — television stations now on the air cover areas occupied by more than one-third of all the families in the United States. Early in 1952, the Atlantic Coast and the Pacific Coast will be linked for television networking. The last link in this coast-to-coast relay will be constructed between Omaha and San Francisco. This means that you people here in Boston will be able to look across 3000 miles of American mountains, prairies, lakes and rivers to the Golden Gate at San Francisco.

The potentialities of television in the teaching field are nothing less than breathtaking. I like the philosophy expressed by Professor Edgar Dale of the Bureau of Educational Research of Ohio State University on the employment of television by our schools:

"What about schools and television? Some people say that television is too expensive for use in schools, that we can't even adequately support the schools we now have. One reason why we can't get adequate support for schools is that the taxpayers do not know what a modern school is. How many people selected at random in your home town could give even the simplest and most elementary description of the modern way of teaching reading all the way from the first grade through high school? Such material on a television screen will cause persons to ask 'Why doesn't my boy get that kind of reaching?' It may also cause some parents and pupils to say, 'Why doesn't our teacher teach that way?'

".....Let us not forget that Germany in 1936 had a movie projector in about one-third of her schools. If Germany could afford motion pictures then, the United States can surely afford television now."



I think educators should make plans to build television stations. While I realize that this is an expensive business, this new medium has such important implications for education that a matter of expense should not be permitted to stand in the way of active participation on the part of education. Schools spend tremendous amounts of money for athletic stadiums and union buildings to provide recreation to students and parents. Within recent years, enormous sums of money have been spent to provide new housing and laboratory facilities of all sorts. Where the need has been realized, the money has been obtained. For example, I know of one state university that has spent more than 13 million dollars since the end of the war for new buildings on its campus. I know of another university that has spent more than two million for new laboratory and research facilities. In view of these facts, would it be too much for a university to spend \$250,000 to provide a television station? Think what such a station would mean in terms of adult education.

Here in Massachusetts, Boston University and the Massachusetts Department of Education have been attracting nation-wide attention by cooperating to explore the potentialities of this new medium of visual education. This has been carried out with the cooperation of WBZ-TV. Here is a practical method by which schools are being enabled to see for themselves what the possibilities of television in teaching are. The plan, as I understand it, has been particularly concerned with broadcasting high quality educational films both to the classrooms and to the home. The proponents of this plan hope that by bringing these educational films into the home, they will give parents a greater opportunity to share in the school experiences of their children. They hope also to stimulate the production of films just as the phonograph has stimulated the production of records.

Television opens up a whole new world of possibilities for the teacher. For the first time he can show and demonstrate as well as talk about his subject over the air waves. We all know that the experiments made in the teaching of surgery have been enthusiastically hailed by the medical profession. Television will prove to be equally effective in the teaching of science, skills for vocational training, the playing of musical instruments, drawing and painting, the teaching of languages and current events.

Syracuse University is pioneering in television in another way. It has its own complete studio on the campus but puts its programs on the air through a Syracuse commercial station.

Science has provided the educator with still another teaching aid, the possibilities of which are just beginning to be tested. I refer to the tape recorder. This device is solving the dilemma of how schools can integrate into their classroom teaching and at their own convenience the programs they desire from both commercial and non-commercial broadcasting. Much of this valuable material has heretofore been lost to the schools. The State of Minnesota, for instance, hopes to have tape recorders for all of its 500 elementary and high school districts this fall. The state plans to maintain a library of 400 to 500 titles. One of the problems that must be solved in this connection is clearance on certain commercial programs.



The National Association of Educational Broadcasters is now setting up a tape transcription network with 26 stations already carrying five hours of programs a week. Among the top flight programs that are planned are those winning awards at the Institute for Education by Radio and the full-length dramas broadcast by BBC.

Tape recording opens up exciting new vistas for the exchange of the cream of educational material between schools all over the nation.

So far I have discussed mainly the facilities by which educators can reach audiences. Now I wish to say a word about the challenge that confronts educators in the problem of radio and television appreciation by the listening and viewing public. No matter how active the educators themselves become as broadcasters, we know that the bulk of broadcasting will be commercial broadcasting. The impact of this on the public is becoming a matter of increasing concern. President Dr. Daniel L. Marsh of Boston University, for example, said recently that "if the television craze continues with the present level of programs, we are destined to have a nation of morons."

To place our children under the guidance of the schools a certain number of hours a day as a preparation for adulthood and citizenship and then permit them to be exposed without guidance to whatever flashes over the radio or on the television screen an equal length of time — or perhaps even longer — is certainly inconsistent.

Mrs. Dorothy Gordon of The New York Times recently hit the nail on the head in a speech before the Southern California Association for Better Radio and Television. She said:

"The children use no basis for selectivity. They take what is put before them. A giant has come into the homes of our nation which threatens to gobble up the normal trend of family living. Television has become an electric nursemaid that dominates completely the lives of our children."

The schools and the parents must face this problem together.

The schools must recognize that radio and television are as important — perhaps more important — than some academic subjects and they must teach the child how to use these mediums constructively. They must teach them to select the good and reject the demoralizing.

I think that one of the most effective jobs being done today in this field is that done by the listener councils of which the Southern California Association for Better Radio and Television, which I just mentioned, is a splendid example. Highly interesting and vital achievements can also be credited to the Radio Listeners of Northern California, the Wisconsin Association for Better Radio Listening and the Radio Council of Greater Cleveland.

You educators and parents have a great identity of interest in the formation of these councils. There is a large amount of splendid material offered by commercial broadcasting. A listener council can evaluate it, make it known to parents and encourage it.



Meanwhile, commercial broadcasters cannot shirk their responsibility. They are licensed to operate in the public interest. They cannot meet that test unless they offer the kind of programming that parents and teachers approve as constructive and wholesome.

In conclusion, I want to say that events move rapidly in the communications field. The time to strike is while the iron is hot. It is my opinion that the next few months will be crucial months for the educators insofar as their participation in radio and television is concerned. I have mentioned the tremendous growth in television and assume that as the television "freeze" is lifted, which should not be too far in the future, there will be a clamor for use of these frequencies. It is imperative that the educator now make plans so that he can make an impressive claim for a part of the radio spectrum for educational television. You should realize, of course, that the FCC, in determining what frequencies shall be allocated for television, cannot ignore the record which has been made by the various parties who make claims at the allocation hearings. You will recall that a very impressive showing was made by the educators when the Commission granted special frequencies for educational FM. Unless the record at the television general allocation hearing, soon to begin, contains concrete and convincing evidence on which the Commission can act, it may have difficulty in justifying the allocation of television frequencies for education. Educators should bear in mind the old proverb:

"He who will not when he may  
When he would he shall have nay."

I think that organizations, such as the one sponsoring this Institute and other educational agencies such as the U. S. Office of Education, the National Association of Educational Broadcasters, the Association for Education by Radio, the Radio Committee of the National Association of Land Grant Colleges and other such organizations should plan cooperatively and combine their efforts to see that the interests of education are fully realized in the new developments which lie ahead in the field of radio and television.

This educational planning group should also carry on an aggressive campaign to inform educators all over the country of the potentialities of educational FM and television and urge that they take immediate advantage of the opportunities which are available to them.

America cannot fulfill her destiny without the continued faithful contributions of you people who are attending this Institute. The advice of Thomas Jefferson still stands:

"Above all things, I hope the education of the common people will be attended to; convinced that on this good sense we may rely with most security for the preservation of a due sense of liberty."

Today there is no more potent means to achieve this ideal of Thomas Jefferson than an improved use of radio and television broadcasting. I wish you well in your efforts to this end.



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CONFERENCE ON LOW POWER, EDUCATIONAL FM BROADCASTING  
DEPAUW UNIVERSITY  
January 27-28

FRIDAY, JANUARY 27

- 4:00-6:00 Registration and inspection of Station WGRE  
Harrison Hall
- 6:00 Dinner in Private Dining Room, Mason Hall  
The price of the dinner will be \$1.50. Reservations  
should be received by Thursday, January 26.
- 7:00 TAKING STOCK--informal reports as to the status of  
station represented by those present. Mr. Vernon  
McKown, WNAS-FM, New Albany presiding.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 28

- 9:30 What the National Association of Educational Broadcasters  
can offer the school stations. Mr. James Miles,  
Director WBAA, Director, Region III, NAEB.
- 10:00 OPERATING THE 10 WATT FM STATION  
Installation problems Dr. Harry Skornia, Indiana  
Engineering Problems Vice President, NAEB  
Operational Problems Mr. Martin Williams, Indianapolis  
Organizational Problems Mr. E.C. Waggoner, Elgin, Ill.
- 12:00 CONFERENCE LUNCHEON in private dining room, Mason Hall  
Address--THE WIDER USE OF OUR FM FACILITIES--Mr. Franklin  
Durham, Chief of Radio, Office of Education  
The price of the luncheon will be \$1.00. Reservations  
should be received by Thursday, January 26.
- 2:00 Programming the School Station--Mr. Tom Carnegie WIRE  
Arthur Jordan Conservatory, Mr. M. McCabe Day, Huntington
- 3:00 Station Public Relations--Dr. Harry Williams, Miami University
- 4:15 Saturday Afternoon Broadcast over Station WIRE from the  
campus studio.

The Old Trail Inn south west of Greencastle on Road 40 is recommended for  
Friday night accomodations. Write directly to Mr. Marion Wilson, Old Trail  
Inn, Greencastle, Indiana. Dinner and Luncheon reservations should be sent  
to Dr. Herold T. Ross; DePauw University; Greencastle, Indiana.

WSYR  
Ken Gardner  
Syracuse 94



1950



Scanned from the National Association of Educational Broadcasters Records  
at the Wisconsin Historical Society as part of  
"Unlocking the Airwaves: Revitalizing an Early Public and Educational Radio Collection."



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